

# **SWaM Vendor Success Stories**

## **ACP INCORPORATED**

**ACP, Incorporated** was established in 2003, as an African American-owned construction company. This award-winning builder of custom homes began his business working on-site for a North Carolina Redevelopment and Housing Project contractor cleaning stoves and other appliances. Over the last five years the owner and president, Sylvester Clay, built upon his capabilities by obtaining trade certifications, contractor licenses, insurance and bonding, and became an award-winning builder of custom homes featured in the *Parade of Homes*.

By spring 2008, due to an economic down turn and a steep decline in the residential construction industry, the company owner was at the point of filing bankruptcy. Mr. Clay had read about Governor Kaine's initiative for small, women-owned, and minority-owned businesses in a trade magazine and decided to seek state government contracting work to save his flailing business. The highly qualified, motivated and tenacious company president set out for a meeting with the manager of the Capital Outlay/Facility Management department at Virginia Commonwealth University State to inquire about the process for bidding on an upcoming construction project with the University. From that meeting, Mr. Clay was advised that his business must be SWaM-certified to perform work for the University, and was referred to DMBE to obtain certification. Upon visiting DMBE, he was personally assisted by the Department's Deputy Director, Paula Gentius-Harris. Ms. Gentius-Harris took time away from her normal, day-to-day responsibilities to fully explain and assist Mr. Clay with the certification process and the documentation required. With documents in-hand, Mr. Clay returned to DMBE the following day and left several hours later SWaM-certified, as a minority-owned business.

Within twenty-four of receiving certification, the business was awarded a \$140,000 contract to perform interior building work for the Medical College of Virginia. In less than a month, the project was completed. ACP has since partnered with DPR Construction, Inc. and as a participant in their mentor-protégé program, together they have landed a \$51 million, multi-year contract for a hospital renovation at the University of Virginia. Cap's share of the award, as a self-performing general contractor, is more than \$17 million. ACP will be responsible for the renovation of two floors at the hospital located in Charlottesville, VA. Mr. Clay attributes his company's success to not only be qualified, but to the guidance and high-quality customer service delivered by the DMBE executive, Ms. Paula Gentius-Harris and the certification staff.

Mr. Clay plans to co-sponsor a conference with DMBE for other SWaM-certified construction contractors to provide training on capacity-building and benefits of self-performance as a general contractor.

## **EXPRESSIONS BY DESIGN, INC**

**Expressions By Design, Inc.**, is a Woman-owned business, established in 2003 by Elizabeth Johnson to provide apparel with logos, promotional items and awards. The business owner, interested in expanding her business, was referred to a State agency in Richmond by the owner of another SWaM-certified business. The agency's buyer took an active role to ensure the business was qualified and SWaM-certified. The relationship yield positive results with referrals to several other state agencies to include: the counties of Taswell, Rockingham and Princess Anne.

Ms. Johnson said, "We do not look at our designation or status as an entitlement. We are very appreciative that the Commonwealth developed the program that allows us to enter the purchasing area with various state agencies. We now have an opportunity to demonstrate our capabilities to work and collaborate with various entities with state government, to reduce the overall cost, and provide saving across the board. For us and our customer, the SWaM program is a WIN-WIN!"

## **OLD DOMINION ELECTRICAL SUPPLY**

The Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) is proud to recognize **Old Dominion Electrical Supply Company**, located in Richmond Virginia, as one of our "SWaM Success Stories".

Old Dominion Electrical Supply is a wholesale/retail distributor of electrical supplies for residential, commercial, military spec and industrial purposes. The company's line of supplies range from wire, cable, flex conduit, conduit fittings, roadway lighting, wiring devices, emergency generators, U.P.S systems, fluorescent lamps, circuit breakers to a complete line of lighting systems. Although the company has been incorporated for 24 years since 1983 and has been SWaM Certified by DMBE for over 14 years since 1993, the company's CEO, Harold Parker Jr., has stated unequivocally that he has seen a "significant jump" in state contracts obtained by his company only recently over the past few years initially beginning after former Governor Warner signed Executive Order 29 (Equal Opportunity in State Procurement) in 2002 and most recently following Governor Kaine's signing of Executive Order 33 (Enhancing Opportunities for Small, Women and Minority-owned businesses) in 2006. In fact, prior to Governor Warner and Governor Kaine's initiatives to help SWaM businesses, Mr. Parker states that his company received "zero state contracts".

Mr. Parker states that DMBE has been extremely helpful to him and he advises all SWaM companies to get certified and he points out that he believes that the key to success for SWaM businesses after they get certified is "follow the advice and instructions of the DMBE staff and your company will definitely see the results". For example, Mr. Parker states that he was advised by Mr. Larry Wright at DMBE to create an online eVA catalog and after he followed Mr. Wright's advice, his company has since picked up several

significant contracts from VDOT and the following Virginia Correctional Centers on an ongoing basis, Sussex 1 & 1 Correctional Center, Powhatan Correctional Center, Coffeewood Correctional Center, Fluvanna Correctional Center and Bland Correctional Center. Mr. Parker states that he is very happy with the results that his company has enjoyed with the state since Governor Kaine began his initiative to help SWaM businesses.

DMBE is proud to recognize Old Dominion Electrical Supply Company, of Richmond, Virginia, as one of our "SWaM Success Stories" and we wish them continued success in the future.

Dated: October 25, 2007